

The Butler Weekly Times.

VOL. XXXII.

BUTLER, MISSOURI, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1909.

NUMBER 5

HORRIBLE CATASTROPHE!

Congressman DeArmond Burned to Death in His Own Home, Together With Grandson

THE HOUSE CONSUMED AND THE TWO BODIES INCINERATED

Fire Originated From Heated Bricks in the Bed

Charred Remains Found Under Air Dome at 1:30 p. m.—Judge De Armond Never Left his Bed—
Little Waddie Made Effort to Escape. Many Telegrams of Condolence from
Prominent Men—Funeral Arrangements Not Yet Made.

One of the most horrible catastrophes which ever occurred in this city was the burning to death of Congressman DeArmond and his favorite grandson "Waddie", son of General James A. DeArmond, in his home early Tuesday morning, Nov. 23, 1909.

Mrs. DeArmond Awakened by Smoke.

Judge DeArmond and Waddie were sleeping in an "Air dome" or outside sleeping apartments, built on the southwest corner of his house to connect with the second story, screened in. Mrs. DeArmond and Mrs. H. C. Clark, the only other occupants of the house occupied separate apartments on the second floor. Mrs. DeArmond was awakened about 2:30 o'clock by stifling smoke and the smell and sound of fire coming from the direction of the air dome. She attempted to reach the air dome, and heard the little boy cry out, and the Judge's voice saying, "It is all right," or similar words, as if he were trying to soothe the boy. Mrs. Clark made a desperate and frantic effort to reach her father, but was driven back by flames after her face was badly burned, her hair scorched and her hands and arms burned.

Judge DeArmond, on retiring, had heated some bricks and wrapped them up to put at his feet, and it is supposed that the fire originated from the bricks and smoldered in the bed for several hours before breaking out, and that Judge DeArmond and Waddie were probably asleep before the flames reached

Fire Companies Responded Promptly.

The fire alarm was turned in and the neighbors and fire companies promptly responded, but the fire had gained such headway that nothing could be done to stop its ravages.

The house was a large one, two stories and a half high. It had been rebuilt, entirely of wood, was very inflammable, and while it took several hours to consume, the heat was terrific. There was complaint that the water pressure was inadequate.

Just as soon as the fire burned down, water was thrown on the debris and volunteers began the search for the remains. Up to noon the ground had been pretty well worked over. As fast as one would tire another would take his place, but without avail.

At noon the Mayor issued the following proclamation:

Proclamation of Mayor.

"Whereas, our distinguished citizen, HON. D. A. DEARMOND, has, with his grandson, met their death in a most unfortunate manner, I therefore request that all places of business close at 1:00 o'clock p. m. and repair to the late residence in order to make a diligent search for their bodies.
By order of J. E. WILLIAMS, Mayor, Nov. 23, 1909.

Early in the morning a few bones were discovered under where the air dome had stood, which was thought by many to be all that was left. Others were firmly of the opinion that the bodies would not be entirely consumed.

The Family Preserved With Grief.

Mrs. D. A. DeArmond is prostrated and has passed the greatest affliction

tion of a physician. Owing to her delicate health grave fears are felt that this horrible shock may result fatally.

General Jas. A. DeArmond and his wife are prostrated over the awful shock of losing a son and father in this terrible manner. Mrs. DeAr-



HON. D. A. DEARMOND.

mond is displaying wonderful fortitude in her great trouble and bereavement, and is cheering her husband up to bear the great affliction.

Telegrams of condolence and inquiry are coming in from all over the country.

David Albaugh DeArmond.

David Albaugh DeArmond, of Butler, was born in Blair county Pa., March 18th 1844; was brought up on a farm; educated in the common schools and at Williamsport Dickinson Seminary. Was State Senator for the old Sixteenth District while living in Dade county. Was supreme court commissioner, Circuit Judge of this Judicial circuit; was elected to the Fifty-second, Fifty-third, Fifty-fourth, Fifty-fifth, Fifty-sixth, Fifty-seventh, Fifty-eighth, Fifty-ninth and Sixtieth, and had been re-elected and served through the extra session of the Sixty-first congress.

Judge DeArmond was a leader among Democrats in Congress, and had a National reputation of a wonderfully strong, analytical mind, a power in debate, a forceful speaker, whose clear and concise statements carried conviction, and but few men in the national congress cared to cross swords with him. Judge DeArmond's life, both private and public, was clean, and above reproach. He had a most remarkable public career, a strong and useful man to his party and the country and his untimely and tragic taking off is deeply mourned by all.

To the devoted wife and children; to the bereaved parents of dear little "Waddie." The Times joins all the people in sincere sympathy and condolence. May the God of our fathers protect and help them bear their sorrow. A great pall of horror and deep sorrow is spread over our little city at this the greatest of personal calam-

ities that has befallen us and the town is draped in mourning.

Charred Remains Found.

About 1:30 o'clock the charred remains of the body of Judge DeArmond was taken from the debris, directly under when the airdome stood. The remains was on the springs, lying on the back, proving conclusively that he had been overcome by the smoke and heat and never left the bed.

A short time later the remains of little "Waddie" was found under what was the corner of the airdome, showing that he had left his bed and endeavored to escape.

Telegrams of Condolence.

Danville, Ills., 11-23-09.—Mrs. D. A. DeArmond, Butler, Mo. I have just learned thru press dispatches of the death of your distinguished husband. During my long association with him in the House of Representatives I have always been impressed with his fine character and splendid ability. In the hour of your great bereavement I extend my heartfelt sympathy.—J. G. Cannon.

Wash., D. C., Nov. 23, '09.—J. A. DeArmond, Butler, Mo. Overwhelmed with your grief. Do you want congressional burial. Committee is already appointed by order of speaker. Answer here.—James F. Lloyd.

Mrs. D. A. DeArmond:—I am greatly grieved at the death of your husband, Judge DeArmond. My heartfelt sympathy in common with all who knew your husband goes out to you in your great affliction.—Wm.

Warner, Nov. 23, '09.

Carthage, Mo., Nov. 23.—Mrs. D. A. DeArmond, Butler. Have just learned of the awful shocking death of your husband and grandson. Mrs. Hackney joins me in rendering our deepest sympathies in this sad hour of your affliction. The Nation has lost one of her truest, best and ablest men.—Thomas Hackney.

Row Over Church Property.

A church row of considerable proportions is on at Spruce, growing out of the recent decision by the Supreme Court in the Presbyterian organizations property rights.

The church building at Spruce was built and owned by the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination. At the time of the union of the two branches of the church, this property passed into the hands of the united congregation under the name of Presbyterians. Recently a demand was made on the church directors in the name of the C. P. church for the property. This was denied them and a writ was secured from a justice of the peace of the township and forcible possession was taken of the church building.

The church officials maintain that in view of the fact that a complete and harmonious union was made between the members of the two congregations, and that no effort has been made to keep the C. P. congregation together, that the decision of the supreme court does not hold in this case. The merits of the case will have to be settled in the courts, but it is very unfortunate that such a controversy should have arisen especially in view of harmony existing in the united congregation and the good being accomplished under the preaching of Rev. J. N. Nichols.